AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF
OLD
CLAIB JONES

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AUTOBIOGRAPHY

OF

"Old Claib Jones"

BY

J. W. HALL

Author of "My Native Hills," "Tales of the Mountains,"
"A Trip to the Bullhole," "Golden Glasses," Etc.

THE MOST REMARKABLE STORY OF
THE MOUNTAINS EVER WRITTEN

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LIFE OF JAMES CLAYBOURN JONES.

CHAPTER I.

I was born in Floyd county, Kentucky, on the Arnold Fork of Beaver creek, February 14, 1826. My father, John Jones, was born and reared in Hawkins county, Tennessee, coming to Floyd county when he was about twenty years old, marrying my mother, Miss Rebecca Arnold, who was born in Tazwell county, Virginia. Shortly after I was born my parents moved down Beaver about fifteen miles and settled on a small creek, named Jones' Fork, in honor of my father, who was one of the pioneer settlers in that section, which was at that time a wilderness full of wild beasts and all kind of wild game. My father had to build wild pounds to put his cows in over night to keep the bears, panthers and wolves from killing them.

There were only five families then living in that part of the Beaver Valley. John Morris, John Hays, John Martin, Joel Gayheart and Christopher Walker. My father was a sportsman and killed his meat from the woods. He cleared a small bottom to raise corn enough for bread, and ground his corn into meal between two flat rocks cut from the native cliffs, we called hand-mill. My mother's sifter was a dressed deer skin with holes made in it with a hot awl.

My father had a hard time to raise his corn, he would build fires all around his little field to keep the bears and deer from eating it up during the night. I can recollect when a boy of seeing the deer and turkeys in long droves all over the woods. My father had to go fifty miles for salt, coffee and other goods.

The reader may well know there were plenty of snakes and fish in that day and time, but there was lard to fry the fish in only when my father would kill a fat bear or a wild hog. My father was a dear lover of women and my mother was high strung and would not put up with his way of doing, so she left him. My father took me to one of his

concubines by the name of Katherine Smith. She was mean to me, and I ran away from them and went to my mother. I was about eight years old when my parents separated. One day a man by the name of John Hays had a house-raising; my mother determined to have revenge for the way Miss Smith had treated me. She armed herself with clubs and went to see Miss Smith. She walked into the house and said "good morning Miss Smith." Miss Smith answered and said, "Why, howdy Bacca," and then it was howdy in earnest. My mother gave her a rap over the head with a club, then seized her, pulling her over the yard fence to the road and beat her with a club until she could not stand up, and then put her foot on her neck and pulled all her hair out and left her lying in the road and then fled to the woods for shelter.

When old John Smith came home he went and swore out a warrant and put it in the hands of the sheriff, a Mr. Hatcher, who scoured the country trying to find my mother. One night he came to Aunt Sarah Hale's while my mother was at supper. When Hatcher stepped into the house my mother slid under the table; the sheriff sat down before the fire to take off his leggins, the family got between the sheriff and mother and she slipped out the door and hid in the chimney corner and eve-dropping the sheriff she heard him say he never intended to go back without her, heard him say he was going through a certain gap, and then my mother went to Sam Conley's and got his gun, waylaid the gap and when the sheriff came along next morning she fired on him, shot him through the thigh, killing his horse. Of course he didn't go back without her, he was taken back without her. Mother sent my father word if he did not send her his fine race mare that she would give him the same play that she did the sheriff.

CHAPTER II.

My father came and brought mother the horse and taking me with her she fled to Tazwell county, Virginia, and when we came to Clinch river it was out of the banks. Mother hired a man to strap me to his shoulders and take

me over the river. The men on both sides of the river threw off their clothes and fell in line below the ford. Mother hit the river first. I can see her until now, when she went into the water pushing her skirts under the water. We all gained the other shore safe and you can bet your coon skin cap there was loud cheering from both sides of the river as we came up out of the water safe. I have always thought that those were good and gallant men that assisted us in this difficulty. We then hit the road for our people. My mother had three sisters then living in Virginia; one had married a Chambers, one a Boyd and the other a Mr. Duff. My mother stayed with her people until my father got the prosecution settled against her in Kentucky, and then came to Virginia after us, but he failed to get us. He made three trips to Virginia before he got us to return. When we got back to Kentucky we all stopped in Magoffin county.

My grandfarther, John Arnold, was a Baptist preacher; he always gave me good counsel, but I was a bad boy and gave them old people lots of trouble. I would drive the ducks, geese and turkeys upon the ridge and make them fly off, would often kill some of them and hide them in some secret place. Grandfather used to gather pine knots and run tar to sell. I would steal the tar and catch the sheep and rub the tar all over them. I give this long detail about my parents to let the reader know who was to blame for all my misfortune through life. My mother always gave me good counsel, but my father would give me bad counsel of which I needed none, as I will relate to you later on.

My mother, with my grandfather Arnold lived on the Burning Fork of Licking river. My mother hired me out one summer to a man by the name of John Trader at four dollars per month. After I finished my summer's work I went home and had to dig Genseng to buy me clothes for the winter. My mother was too poor to help me much as she had to take care of her old father, but while I was at work for Trader I had a good time with a girl, a Miss Cook, but me and the Trader family had all sorts of old Harry, you bet. But I always came out with the best end of the fray. There was a cabinet worker who lived in that section by the name of Burnette. I hired to him to learn the trade. He moved to Adair county, on Green river, and I stayed with him one year. I was then about twelve years old. His wife's name was Sarah. They both belonged to the Methodist church. She was very fond of fishing; we would

spend a good deal of the time fishing, but after so long a time Mr. Burnette got wrong with us, and I had to leave, or do worse. I will say this: I was only a boy and she was a woman, but I loved her and I love her still. Her lips would stick to mine like a tree frog's toes to a green leaf.

I then set in with a man by the name of Mays, who was a brother-in-law of Mr. Burnette, to finish learning my trade. I lived with him about one year. Mr. Mays' wife had no children and they had taken a girl to raise by the name of Phoenix. I got along with her about the same as I did with Mrs. Burnette, but at length we were caught up with and Mrs. Mays said to me, "Claybourn, what made you treat my child so?" I said to her, "Mrs. Mays, if some one should offer you a piece of pie when you were hungry, wouldn't you take it?" And then it was that she made at me with a chair. Mr. Mays caught the chair and said, "Don't do that Nancy, for she is a woman of age and Clayburn is only a boy; don't blame him for it." And then came trouble between the Mays. Mrs. Mays wanted to keep the girl and Mr. Mays wanted to keep me, but I said, "Mrs. Mays, Marinda is an orphan girl and I am a boy so let her stay with mother and I will go." So when I called her mother, Mrs. Mays grabbed me and hugged and kissed me, and we all took a hearty cry and then it was I left Adair county and made my way back to Magoffin county.

CHAPTER III.

I had an uncle, James Martin, who moved from Floyd county, who had to carry their goods on horse-back. My mother sent me with them. I rode a horse and carried a pack. Martin stopped at Stinson's creek in Carter county, and there were some colored people living there. One day my aunt sent me to get her some wood to wash with. I carried the wood to the wash place and one of the negro boys stole my wood and carried it off. I went on him for the wood and we soon come together and he was about to knock the stuffin out of me, and I went for my knife and give him a blow in the shoulder and then he made for the house. I pursued after him and cut his hind quarters all

to pieces. That was the first time I ever smelt blood, and that was negro's.

When I got back to my mother I went to work for grandfather Arnold. He had a good dog and bought me a gun and it was no trouble to kill a good mess of game before breakfast. I made a crop for mother and then went to Carter county for work. I got a job and worked a while and then I was taken sick. I hired a man by the name of Jim Hale to take me home; on our way home we passed a saloon, called a grocery then. There was a big crowd drinking and one man asked me to treat the crowd, and I did so; in a short time he called on me again. I told him I had been sick and had spent nearly all my money to pay my board and doctor's bill. He said I had to treat the crowd again or take a damned good beating. I asked him to leave me alone and started away from him, but he caught me and threw me on the ground and kicked me several times in the side and in the face, and it was a long time after he was taken off of me before I could stand alone. I went home and kept my bed for several weeks, but I finally got well. I studied a long time how I had been treated by this man. His name I will not tell. I asked God to show me if it would be an unpardonable sin to kill him, so I made up my mind to have revenge or lose my life. I had not even told my mother about it, so one day I fixed myself, put on my clothes, put my shot pouch on, took down my gun and put my pistol in my pocket. I then went up a dark drain and killing a long string of squirrels, dressed three of them, wrapped them up in green leaves and put them in my pocket. I then went near the road, set up my gun against the tree, hung my shot pouch on my gun stick and threw myself into the mountains. I traveled all that day in the woods, late in the evening I went up a drain, struck a fire and roasted my meat and eat it without bread or salt. I then went to the road and traveled all night. The next day I went off the road up a dark hollow and pulling some bark off a log, made me a fire, roasted my meat and eat it as before. Laid there all day for I had to be as sly as a fox to keep any one from seeing me. The next night I went to the place where I learned he was shantying, and as God would have it he was the first man I saw. I took out my pistol and put in fresh cartridges and threw myself behind a rack of wood which concealed the view from the shanty. I had to crawl about one hundred yards in order to get a fair shot at him. I fired three shots and when

he stopped at the shanty he was dead. I made my way to the woods and hid in a thicket until night. I traveled all night and next day again hid in a thicket; when night came I hit the road for home. I never told any one, not even my mother, about it, and no suspicion ever rested on me for the crime. After I had committed this awful crime I went back home to mother. I was then about fourteen years old. I went up in the hollow where I had left my gun, picked her up from against the tree, took my dog and went to the woods for my sport. That fall I caught twenty-eight coons, killed two bears and eighteen deer. There were plenty of game in those days and like old Nimrod, I was a great hunter before the Lord.

CHAPTER IV.

There were two girls living on the Scab fork. A Wireman girl and one Malinda Rowe. I loved the Rowe girl the best, so we finally agreed to marry and set the time. I went to the furnace to work and stayed a month over my time in order to get my money, and when I came back my Malinda had married a man by the name of John Slusher. I did not intend to be beaten, so I set out to beat Slusher. I loved Malinda and knew she loved me some for she proved to me afterwards that she did, so I stopped at Slusher's intending to stay there awhile, and, of course, we soon got into a row over Malinda. One night three of Slusher's brothers came to John's house and in a short time we were all in a row, but I soon cleaned them up. I busted John's head with a grind-stone, run the others in the house, knocked the chimney down and busted all the bee-gums, stabbed the old coon dog and left. I went to Henry Bailey's, a friend of mine, and got my gun. They got up a big crowd to hunt for me and as I was waiting for them one day I saw them stop at the house of Will Loveley's. I watched them put up their horses in the barn and feed them, saw them go out in the orchard, turn down a barrel and drink some cider. Then it was my time to do something to get shut of them. I first went to the cider, drank all I wanted, turned over the barrel, went to the crib, filled the horses'

troughs with corn, took out my knife and cut off all the mane and tails, put their tails in the troughs and left. I was then about fifteen years old. I then went to Beaver creek to where my father lived and we together went to Hawkins county, Tennessee.

Mr. John Martin wrote me that Slusher's head was sure enough busted and that he was taking hard fits and that his wife had left him.

While in Tennessee I fell in love with a girl by the name of Epperson. She was as pretty as a June peach, and finally we married. I was about sixteen years old. Her mother was a widow and she had an only son by the name of Clint. I went to my wife's home to live and stayed about one month when I caught onto some of her tricks and I left her. Her mother got a guard to keep me away for fear I would kill some of them. I heard of it and fixing myself went to the house and saw the guard and told them I understood they were there to keep me away, and if that was their business they had better leave while times were good, so all of them left. The old lady left with them and I went in the house, shot the door all to pieces, kissed my wife good-bye and left.

I then made my way back to Floyd county and went to work at a mining town by the name of Mellensburg. While there I fell in love, as usual, with a girl by the name of Matrha Hubbard, but as soon as her people learned that I was a married man they all soured on me and I had to leave. I then took a job to run coal boats down the Big Sandy river to Cincinnati. I was as wild as a Cherokee Indian then. One night we left Catlettsburg for Cincinnati with a man by the name of John Jones. We stopped at a small town by the name of Hanging Rock. We went to a house of ill-fame and had been there but a few minutes when two big black buck negroes stepped in and bid us leave. I told them all right. I had a good gun so I did leave, but I left two buck negroes dead on the floor. We run down the bank, jumped in our skiff and made our way to the coal boats and when we got there we were safe. I made the trip and then went to my father's to live. I told him all my troubles. I took my gun and went to the woods for my sport, taking with me my bread, salt and coffee. I lay out a week at a time by myself with my faithful dog as my companion. I would drag the bear and deer down to the creeks and would then go in home. My father had a large bull and we would put a pack saddle on the beast and

would tie two deer together and throw them over the saddle and then tie the bear to a single-tree by their heads and snake them in home. I lived a lonesome life, but I had plenty of bear meat and venison.

CHAPTER V.

After this I went to Lawrence county, Ohio, and stopped on Ice creek and went to work at one dollar per day and board on a farm with a man by the name of Fred Fisher, who had an only daughter, Matilda, and a pleasant child she was, and soon when the old folks would turn their backs, we was picking at each other and became good friends. I soon found out I was the big guy with her parents, and also with her. One day when we were out driving I asked her how she would like to marry me. She asked me to give her a few days to study over the matter, but before we had spent the day driving she consented to be my wife. I called on the old people for Matilda and found them willing to give their consent, so I asked Mr. Fisher to set the time for the wedding. He told me to work on and say nothing about it and he would go with me to town after the license, as Matilda was under age. I was about twenty-one then. After we married I bought me a fine mule team and wagon and went to work with my team. Matilda and I lived together as happy as hearts could wish about one year, until Mr. Fisher had learned that I had been married before. He asked me for the truth and I told him all, but it didn't do him any good; he would mutter and growl at Matilda, so one day I asked him to stop making trouble with my wife for she was not to blame. One day I concluded to settle the trouble between myself and the Fisher family. I caught up my team, hitched them to the wagon and driving to Ironton, sold them and went to old Floyd county.

I did not tell my wife that I was going to leave her as I could not afford to do it, for I had a good wife and left her without any cause whatever on her part. About six months after I left her she became the mother of a girl baby who now lives somewhere in Ohio. I then went to my

mother who was living on Middle creek in Floyd county. I went to work at my old trade, running coal boats to the mouth of Big Sandy. I made several trips to Catlettsburg. I then went to Bunavista furnace and hired to a man by the name of Harvey Burch at one dollar per day and board. Burch was a mean old drunkard, but had a good wife, but better still there was a handsome little girl at this place also. She was little but as sweet as a peach. She was about fourteen. One day the old lady caught me and Lizzie gathering grapes alone in the head of a dark drain, all by ourselves. She made war with us and told the old man, so the old drunkard turned me off and wouldn't pay me a cent. I left his house, but I stopped at a Mr. Collin's near by about two weeks. I called on Burch to pay me for my work and he wouldn't do it, so one night my bright-eyed girl came to me and asked me to go with her. We hit the road, traveled that night and next day we crossed the Ohio river at Portsmouth and stopped there about two weeks, then went to Cannonsburg, in Carter county. I left my girl there and went to Mr. Burch and asked him again to pay me. He said he would, and so he did with a warrant for stealing his child. I give him to understand that the girl stole me, and while the sheriff was getting up the jury I bid the guards good-bye and went for my girl. I took her to my home and was there about six months, when I learned that old Burch had put up a reward of five hundred dollars for me and the girl. I went back to Carter county with the girl, but told her nothing about the reward, and when I got to Carter I kept the girl hid for a week and showing myself to Mr. Burch one day he got his gun and told Mr. Collins he would kill me on first sight. So one day I saw him go by the furnace with his gun. I watched for him to come back, and when I saw him coming, I went to the creek and took under the bank, went to where he had to come down the bank. I took the goes on him, the first thing he knew I had my gun on him and told him he had to make use of his gun or lay her away. I then asked him for the reward he had put up for me and the girl. He then asked me to marry the girl. I said, "You say I have two wives already, and you know if that is true I can't marry your daughter." I then told him to keep his girl and the reward and go to grass with them, but that he had to leave me alone. He took me at my word and I was glad of it for I cared nothing for him nor his girl. I had

only taken her away to spite him. I was then about twenty-three years old.

CHAPTER VI.

I then began to think of the welfare of my soul and began to go to church and left off my bad ways for several years, so I concluded to join the church. My choice was the old Baptist, but they wouldn't take me in their church because I had two living women, so I did not join any church. The reason was, I didn't want to be a hypocrite, and I concluded to take me another wife and I promised myself and my God if he would spare my life until I could find me another good wife I would serve him the remainder of my days. By and by I went to live with Capt. Bowling Hall on Beaver, near where I was born, who was about the same age as myself and who had married my first cousin. The Captain was a gambler and had a brother Miles, and one Lee Hall, who were also gamblers. They had a sister by the name of Suckey who fell in love with me (so she said) and wanted us to marry, but I had two reasons for not marrying her, one was, she was older than I, and the other was she had been snake bitten by a nice-mouthed snake by the name of Polly.

Lee Hall and I went to Letcher county to gamble with Jim Sarver and George Brashears, and they had two blossom-eyed girls, and after we had won all their money we concluded to take their girls also. After so long we beat their time. Hall's girl's name was Shine Polly and shine she was. My girl's name was Chrissie Holbrook. We spent some time with the girls. By this time I had forgotten the promise I had made to God and was as mean as ever, but I had not forgotten the vow I had made. I concluded to marry and so I did marry a witch or the devil in person, one or the other or both. She was my third wife, or at least my third woman, but after she had became the mother of two children I did all I could to live in peace with her. My desire was to raise my children and to serve God, but like old Rip my happiest days were after I had gathered my corn into the crib, to take my gun and fav-

orite dog and go to the woods to kill game. I recollect one week's hunt. I think it was the best week's hunt I ever made. I had a large dog I called Bolley, so one night there fell a big snow. Me and Bolley took a hearty breakfast and started for our days hunt. We had not gone far before we struck a trail of bear and went for them. I pulled through the snow as fast as I could and coming to a large cliff of rocks Bolley made a dash under the cliff and the bear fight began. The dog and the old bear had come together. The dog had her by the nose. I threw my gun on the old bear and shot her dead. The two cubs run out, one took a tree near the cliff, the other hit the snow. I shot the cub out of the tree and put the dog after the other. He run it about a mile and put it up a tree. I shot it out, carried the bear back to the cliff, striking a fire with a flint. I pulled the bears under the rock and there spent the night with the bears. The next day I went to my camp. I took one of the bears with me as I went and after breakfast I went after father's old bull to help me bring in the bears. We put the gears and pack saddle on the bull and as I was about give out wading the snow I rode the old bull back to the cliff, tied a rope around the bears head and snaked them in home. I continued to hunt all that week and killed five deer in adition to the three bears I had already bagged.

I carried a rifle at that time of large bore which had done service in the Indian wars of the South in Jackson's army and was in the war of 1815. I called her Old Champee. This gun was my faithful ally and never belied me in after years. I was then about twenty-five years old. This is the way I spent my life in part in order to live in peace with my wife, but I couldn't see any peace with her. So one day she left me and went home to her father. I didn't follow her. I was glad she was gone. My father and a woman by the name of Gibson were living on a farm near by so I went and stayed with them. There lived a lady-bug with her mother by the name of Addaline Gayheart, and as we were partly raised together we was good frineds. One day I hunted down to see Miss Adaline and killed a large deer on my way, and when I got there what do you think? I was so surprised to see a man by the name of Nelson Mosely, all dressed up with his high fur hat, his blue genes suit and a paper collar, ground hog moccasins and a putting on airs and saying that no man could take Miss Adaline from him.

After supper I went into the kitchen and told her what

Mr. Moseley was saying. I told her to take her seat after supper and then it was her mother spoke up and said, "Go right now and I will wash the dishes myself," so I done up Mr. Moseley's curb for him with Miss Adaline. A short time after that Moseley and I met at a treat. Lewis and Kels Mosely, his brothers, were there also. They raised a fray with me. Lewis caught me and held me and Kelse cut me thirteen times with a knife. I will only say this they were both short lived men after this, being shot from ambush and killed. Then after I was wounded my wife came back to me and brought the same old hell with her. My mother came and nursed me while I lay wounded and stayed with me as long as she lived, and died in the year of 1871, at the age of 77 years.

CHAPTER VII.

The great Civil War had now begun and I was a Democrat in politics, but I cast my fortune with the Union cause and this compelled me to leave home or be killed. A man lived near me by the name of Coburn who had a son that had joined the Rebel army and coming home the old man Coburn reported me as Yankee. I took to the brush and began dodging for my life. The Coburns robbed my house, took everything I had and then burned the house and left my wife and children homeless. I sent my wife to one of her sisters while I stayed in hiding. One day I met up with one of the Coburns. He was carrying off some of my household goods he had stolen from my house. We had some hot words. He made at me with a large knife and I knocked him down with my gun and pulling my knife gave him a stroke or two, and left him lying in the road. I then went to Perry county and soon there was a man sent into Perry by the name of Tom Johnson from the United States army to raise a battalion of soldiers, and I enlisted with the Federal forces. We went to work and soon had enough men to organize a battalion. We met together in Harlan county to organize. Johnson and a Mr. Blankinship were candidates for Major. Blankinship was elected and we were mustered into the Union army October 13,

1862, and were mustered out of the Harlan Battalion January 13, 1863.

I was first Leiutenant under Captain Morgan of Company A. I was patrolled to do all the scouting, hardly a raid was made without sending for me to get my advice. I went to Floyd county after my wife and mother, and was captured by Col. Caudill who took me to Letcher county. Caudill's company was ordered to Richmond, Va. They camped on the Rock House and stayed there three days and nights. They guarded me closely. I learned when they were going to start for Richmond and I made up my mind to not go with them quite so far. The weather was very cold and they made a big log fire at the mouth of our camp. I lay down on the outside in order to be able to work the stakes loose, and I saw one of the guards lay his pistol on the end of a log of wood, and as soon as the guards had all fallen asleep I eased up and got the gun, and lay back on the ground and raising the tent cloth I rolled out-side. I was about the middle of the camp, but I made my way out without being observed. I went up the hill to the top of the ridge and it was so cold I had to run up and down the ridge to keep from freezing till day-light. About eleven o'clock in the day I came to the Old Life Breeding farm and saw a boy hauling wood and following the haul road to where Breeding was chopping wood. I told him I was hungry and he sent the boy back to the house after my dinner. The boy brought me a good dinner. Breeding was a Union man. I then went to a moonshine still Breeding had told me about and got a canteen of whiskey. After drinking enough to make me feel brave as it was fighting whiskey—a half print would have made a Jack-rabbit spit in the face of a bull dog—I then left the woods and took the road, and hadn't gone a mile until I met Col. Ben Caudill himself. He at once drew his sword and ordered me to turn my course. I threw my gun on him and told him to hit the road and not to look back; if he did I would kill him. He took me at my word, and I was glad of it for I didn't know whether my gun would fire or not. The Colonel then put a reward of $500 for my capture, but he never had the pleasure of getting me, but I did help capture him at Gladeville, Va.

CHAPTER VIII.

In a few days after this I took two men and made a raid on the Rebel camp about five miles below Whitesburg. I han't gotten to the place I wanted to before I saw the Rebels coming. I got the first fire on them and made one of them leave his horse and stick his nose in the mud. His name was Mitchell.

Captain Stamper had moved about fifteen miles below Whitesburg, having a good time drinking apple jack, and, as I used to love to drink myself, I concluded to take my men and meet the Captain and help him drink the brandy. We started one evening and marched all night. Next morning about day we came in sight of old Aunt Cynthian Boggs' apple orchard. I placed my men in the brush to watch the Rebels. In the evening we saw some men in the road, all afoot. They left the road and went to the woods, and after awhile I saw a man coming on a horse. It proved to be the Captain himself. He had two large jugs under him and was headed for Aunt Cynthian Ann's to get some of her apple jack. I watched the place awhile and in a short time we heard a big racket down at the house. I took two men, went to the house, stepped in the door and threw my gun on the Captain and told him to surrender. I told Aunt Cynthian to fill the Captain's jugs for him as I knew he would like to have a dram the next morning. After paying her for the brandy, I told the Captain I would treat him white. He sent a girl to his men with a note telling them that he was a prisoner and for them to go back to camp. I told him if we were fired on before we got to our camp I would kill him. I got on the Rebel's fine horse, put the jugs across the saddle, took the Captain up behind me and started for camp. When we got to camp I learned that Col. Caudill had captured a Federal Captain belonging to the Thirty-ninth by the name of Webb. We sent in a flag of truce asking to exchange Captains, the next day the Rebels brought Captain Webb and exchanged him for Captain Stamper.

In a few weeks Major Blankinship let his men go home on a five days furlough. We went home and on the day we were all to report at camp, the Rebels had placed them-

selves on all the roads and had capturd every man that had went to camp. I stayed at home and in the evening I heard our men were all captured. Col. Caudill had placed himself on the road which he thought I was to come to kill me, to get rid of paying the reward he had offered for my capture, but the old Grey fox, as he called himself, didn't get me. This was one time the Rebels got the best of us. It was dark when the Rebels crossed the mountains and while crossing they met a company of their own men and got into a fight with them and most of all our men got away and returned to camp. Major Blankinship was hot and in making a raid on the Rebel camp lost two men in the attack and then returned to camp.

In a few weeks the Rebels went from Whitesburg to the salt wells in Perry county. Captain Morgan and myself concluded to drive the Rebels out of Perry and on our way we met and engaged them in battle on Leatherwood creek and surprised them while they were stealing a deaf and dumb man's watermelons. There was one man killed on each side. The Rebels were commanded by Captain Jesse Caudill, a brave man. He was on one side of the creek and I was on the other. He was standing behind a small tree. I was watching him closely and as he turned to give a command to his men I give him a Yankee pill from Shampee some where in his hind quarters. We had a hot time for awhile. I was unusually mad, not because we had met the Rebels, for we had defeated them, but I had gathered an armful of ripe pawpaws and had to drop them when the fight began. We captured the watermelons also from the deaf man and all their grub. We got the biggest pone of corn bread I ever saw. It would have weighed more than fifty pounds. They had baked it in a salt kettle and were carrying it in a coffee sack.

CHAPTER IX.

The next battle I was in while I belonged to the Harlan Battalion was with the Georgia Ann Tigers, who were in camp near Harlantown. We went on them one morning before day and surrounded them, fired on their camp and

the fight began. They formed line of battle and fired several rounds. We were dropping them so fast they fell back behind the creek bank. We had it there for about three hours. We had nothing to shoot at but their heads. They finally retreated in bad order; we captured everything they had and carried it to our camp. They left eighteen dead on the ground, we didn't learn the number wounded, but two more died of their wounds. We buried the dead soldiers and returned to our camp.

Our next trouble was with Col. Slemp from Virginia. He had too many men for us, but we gave him the best we had in our shop, but he drove us out of camp and stayed one night. We fought him going and coming from the brush. I could hear the boys firing on them day and night. The most of our men had been gone more than a week before they got back to camp. There lived a Mr. Eversole near by who was a moonshiner. He had a barrel of brandy hid in the woods, so he fired on Slemp's men, they drove him off and found his brandy. They took it down in the road and all got drunk. I took my men down to the lower pickets, in a skirmish I killed three of the pickets and drove the remainder in the camp. Slemp then retreated into Virginia. The next trouble was with Lieutenant Bentley. We had a man with us by the name of Screech who lived on Mason's creek near the salt wells. Major Cineworth, a Rebel, was in camp at the salt wells. Henry Hall, Gilbert Screech and myself went over to Screech's house, and next day went to the Rebel camp and finding that they were too many for us we passed them by and went about one mile up a creek and suddenly met a company of Rebels in a short curve in the road. Both sides opened fire at the same time. I shot and wounded the Lieutenant. The lower side of the road was very steep and covered with pine and laurel, the Rebels went over into the pine for shelter. They had been out stealing and had a fine load of chickens which they dropped in the road. We carried the chickens up into the woods and cut them loose. The little roosters seemed to be very well satisfied and went to scratching and crowing like Democrats. We were about eighteen miles from camp and had to leave all the spoils behind. Captain Shade Combs and myself were guarding some sick men at the mouth of Carr's fork when the Rebel Captain, Ans Hays, thought he would cut a big dash by capturing the sick men. Hays attacked our camp with several times our number. Rev. Ira Combs, myself and two other soldiers

only had guns, but we held the Rebels at bay until the sick men all got away and held the fort until the enemy retreated and left us the victors. After that we were ordered to camp to be mustered out of service. This was January 13, 1863. In a few days after we were mustered out Gen. John H. Morgan made a raid through Harlan county, captured our Major and killed him, so that put an end to the Harlan Battalion.

CHAPTER X.

We then went to Irvine, Ky., and joined the Fourteenth Kentucky Cavalry and stayed at Irvine about one week, then the Fourteenth moved to Richmond, Ky., and on examination I was pronounced a disabled bodied man and was left out. My men seemed to all be dissatisfied about them not taking me in so Col. Lilly told me to stay with the command and he would give me work to do. He kept me out as a spy and very often with a bunch of men. I took two men and went to Perry couny as a spy. William Mosely and Font Fuller went with me. We captured a man on Mason's creek by the name of Cornett. I promised his wife that I would not have him hurt if I could prevent it. I had a good horse and made the prisoner ride behind me to better protect him, for Mosely was mad because the Rebels had run him off from his home and had broken up his house and took all he had, and he was swearing vengence against all the prisoners. I took Cornett with me to a small log cabin and made a good fire and after dark Mosely and Fuller came to the cabin and wanted in. I told them that I could not let them in, they flew mad and said they would break the door down. I told the prisoner to take my pistol and help me shoot if they tried to come in. Next morning I turned Mosely and Fuller off and took charge of the prisoner myself and started for Booneville. The next night I stopped on Goose creek, there were three women at the house, all the men had gone to the war. I was worn out for sleep and put two of the girls to guard the prisoner and gave them my arms and the girls said if the prisoner tried to escape they would kill him, for they wanted to kill a Rebel anyway, for the Rebels had killed one of the

women's husbands and the other's brother a few weeks before. The girls proved to be good soldiers and kept their prisoner safe until morning. I took the prisoner on to Booneville and turned him over to Col. Lilly and the soldiers of the Fourteenth who had been with me in former raids, seized me and lifting me on their shoulders carried me all over the camp.

Next Col. Lilly sent me with a posse of men to Letcher county. We were on march two days, reaching Whitesburg. On Sand Lick we were fierd upon by the Rebels, but when we reached town the Rebels had all retreated towards Virginia. We saw a wagon crossing the point above town so we went for it and fired on the men in charge of the wagon and they all broke and run leaving the wagon in the road and when we came up we found the wagon loaded with dried apples and a barrel of apple brandy. After filling our canteens we concluded to bury the barrel of brandy. There was a man with us by the name of John Smith, so Uncle John preached the funeral of good old apple jack and we buried him in a sand-bar, then drove the wagon up a branch, took the fruit out and hid it and piled the wagon full of fence rails and firing them burned up the wagon. We captured a Mr. Sturdivant and he told us the Rebels would be back, we marched down the river about a mile and I stationed my men in the gap of a ridge below a mill dam and waited their return. We let the Rebels pass us, then fired on them. We sent the Yankee pills so thick after them they had to swim the mill pond, we pursued after them and sent them back to Virginia. We then went back to the grave of Gen. Apple Jack, dug him up and carried him to camp and found a good excuse for staying a few days longer.

My men bantered me and my pet Rebel for a game of poker, so me and Mr. Sturdivant fixed up our signs and went for all the green back they had. We had a good old time courting the girls, playing cards and drinking brandy. After me and my pet Rebel had won all the money the boys had, I swore him to not take up arms against the Union and let him go home. I captured my brother-in-law, Miles Webb and a Mr. Williams. We went up a branch to rest a day or two. We killed a cow and put up with a man by the name of Caudill who was making cane molasses. We borrowed one of their kettles and hired the girls to kill us two chickens for me and the prisoner's supper. The boys were cooking super on the outside. After we had all eaten

supper, I failed to put out any pickets, for we still had some of the good old apple brandy and didn't care if it snowed. Immediately the guns began on the outside, the Rebels had us surrounded, we quickly rallied in line and commanding the men to follow me we fired in front of us as we went, so we all got away safe with the prisoners except my brother-in-law Webb. As soon as we got through their lines we turned back and began pouring the lead to them. I heard Captain Hall order his men to hold their grounds until every man was killed. They fell back behind the houses and there was a hot time for awhile. It soon became dark and the Rebels retreated to Whitesburg. As soon as Col. Caudill had learned I had whipped his men over the body of General Apple Jack he took to the woods. Next day I swore the prisoners and sent them home.

CHAPTER XI.

I learned that Captain Hays was camping at the mouth of Lot's creek, below Hazard, in Perry county. Col. Lilly ordered Captain Strong to take a company of men and break up the Rebel den. Strong told the men as many as wanted to go with me, to fall in line. The order was soon filled. We marched on the Rebel camp, surrounded them while they were cooking breakfast. I ordered them to surrenedr, they began to parley, I ordered the men to fire on them and then fun began. The Captain's men returned our fire and then took leg bail and fled to the woods. We captured all they had, even their guns and sent them to Dixie for amunition, we ate their breakfast, drank their Jeff Davis coffee and got several jugs of moonshine and put out for Letcher. On our way we run into Captain Cook's company on Carr's fork. We made a charge on them and they were as brave as Captain Hays' men, they fled to the woods. In the fight I shot and killed Lieutenant Mays. We run on another posse of Rebels commanded by the notorious Lige Hixs. Captain Hixs rather started to run from a house near by and we fired on him. He jumped behind a stump and threw up his hands. I knew him and running to him I commanded the men to cease firing. I had stayed at his house

many years before while I lay wounded and I could not have him hurt. When we got back to Whitesburg the Rebels had all gone to Virginia. We then returned to Booneville. On this raid we killed and captured thirteen of the enemy without losing a single man.

Col. Lilly then sent me back to Letcher county with a few men and when we got to Whitesburg we couldn't hear of any Rebels, but in going back to camp we captured two Rebel deserters, and going up Mason's creek I stopped at a house to buy some cucumbers and while I was talking to the young lady I heard shooting ahead of me I put spurs to my horse and when I came up I found a man by the name of Calhoun had killed both of the prisoners. From Booneville we went to Camp Nelson and on our way Leslie Johnson and Calhoun fell out over killing the prisoners, Calhound shot Johnson and then fled to Ohio. Captain Foster with a posse was in camp at Round Bottom doing a lot of robbing and stealing, and I took Captain Strong's men and marched on their camp. They were camping in a school-house near the river. They had just left the camp and gone down the river. We captured a Rebel spy and he told us that they would be back. We took up a position on both sides of the mountain and waited their return. They marched right up between us before we fired on them. They took shelter behind the river bank. We killed three at the house and two as they crossed the road and five more at a pass down the river while they were crossing and captured seventeen more. The captain and the rest of his men swam the river and escaped. On this raid we killed and captured twenty-seven of the Grey Coats without losing a single man.

While at Camp Nelson we learned that Gen. John H. Morgan was marching on Lexington, so we hurried to that point, but Morgan went by way of Cynthiana and crossed into Ohio below Cincinnati, and being eluded by Morgan, we learned that Col. Clay was in Eastern Kentucky, and was ordered to intercept his march. We met the Rebels at the mouth of Puncheon creek on Licking river. The enemy fought with great bravery until Col. Clay was slain and his men broke and fled in confusion. We were then ordered to Fort Nelson and the Fourteenth Kentucky was mustered out of service. This was the end of the great Civil War, and we all took a long breath, then breathed easily and thanking God that it was all over went to our homes, but when we got back home, it was far from being the homes

we had left a few short years before, for many of our dearest friends had answered the roll call on the other shore.

CHAPTER XII.

Returning to Booneville, where lived my mother, staying there a short time I moved to Carter county, Kentucky, settled on Big Sinking creek and bought me a farm and followed farming for the next eight years. I lived a terrible life with my wife, she did everything she could to break me up, she would leave home and be gone for a week at a time, and at last we separated. I gave her all she wanted out of the house and fifty dollars in money, with the understanding that she was to go and not bother me any more. She took a man by the name of Underwood and went to Ohio. Underwood beat her out of all I give her and then she came back on me again, but I had gotten me another woman to stay with my children by the name of Hanshew. We lived together until we had two children, but that old flax brate gave me all the trouble she could. I got into some trouble with the Bears and Browns. Lazarus Bear married Miss Sarah Brown, a sweetheart of mine, and she had a younger sister also. The Bears concluded to give me a good thrashing. The day was set and their bully, Jim Brown, was to do the job, on the following Saturday at a treat at Big Springs, on Sinking creek. We all meet and soon we were all drinking moonshine freely. Mr. Brown asked me if I was well and I told him I was, he then told me he was going to whip me, and I told him that was all right if he could do it, so we came together. Brown had an awful big nose. I gave him a hard blow on his snout and sent him to the ground, so I whipped their bully without a scratch, but one of the Bears drew his knife and made at me. I got my knife as quick as I could and made a dash at him, but he jumped behind Miss Amy Brown's skirts and I turned to the crowd and said, "Boys there is one bear gone to hole." But the fight didn't interfere with my friendship with the girls, but the men had it in for me good and strong. I was summoned to court one week and while I was away the Browns and Bears stole my corn, broke into my smoke house and

took all my bacon. I took out a search warrant and found two sides of bacon at one of the Bears and two sides at Jim Brown's hid in a cliff near the house. I knew my meat for I had put red pepper on it when salting it down, so I put them to work for their grub. One day a chance to get even presented itself. Jim Brown had worked him out a fine wether sheep, and I saw him bring it home and tie it to a bush and go to the house. I went to the sheep untied it from the bush and drove it over to my house and killed Mr. Brown's mutton for him. Brown searched all over the country for his wether, but if he had looked in my smoke-house he would have found it, as I did my meat in his smoke-house.

CHAPTER XIII.

I will now give you a sketch of the "Holbrook and Underwood War." I will say to the reader that I can't afford to give myself away for I am still alive. I will only mention the men killed without giving the participants in the actual killing.

The trouble began over a dog fight at the burial of old man Penlum. In a few days Alex Penlum was waylaid and shot from the brush by the Holbrook party and the Holbrooks give orders for no one to go after the doctor for the wounded man, if they did they would share the same fate. As soon as old George Underwood heard that Penlum was shot he went for the doctor and as he was returning home he was also shot from ambush. John Martin, who was then living in Carter county, was given orders to leave the country or die. Martin started to leave and got as far as Lewis Underwoods and he was taken sick and he had to stop there, and while going for a doctor for his wife Martin stayed all night at my house, going to Olive Hill, and then in a few days Lewis Underwood was waylaid and shot as he went to the yard after wood. Then Alvis Underwood was sent for and he and John Martin took the trail of the party who did the shooting and followed the trail to the house of one of the Holbrook's. Then the Underwoods took Lewis to his father's house which is now called "Fort Underwood.

Miss Vina Martin came and took John Martin's wife home with her, but Martin stayed at Ft. Underwood. Dr. John Steel came to attend the wounded man at the fort, and the doctor came himself and hired me to go to the fort and wait on the wounded man, as I had had considerable experience in attending wounded men during the Civil War, and I went and that is how I came to be in that war. The Stamper party sent me word that if I didn't leave Ft. Underwood that they would burn my house and kill my children. I sent them back word if they had no houses they could talk about burning mine. The Stampers and Holbrooks had a large crowd of men, but the Underwoods had but five men, three to guard the fort and two to kill crows. The Stamper party waylaid our fort and fired on it several times. We were short on amunition and also on arms, but old George Underwood had a sister, a chip off the same block, so she came to us with plenty of guns and amunition. She brought me from my home old Shampee, my old trusty bear gun that I had carried through the Civil War, and she stayed with us during the whole of the siege on Ft. Underwood. The Stampers were independent, they thought they had us in a jug, but they were mistaken. We kept two men out all the time. When our men went out and came back our pass-word was "Another crow has fallen," and in a few days the news would get out that some man had been killed, and so it went on and on and one morning seven crows were killed before breakfast and I was told that the seven men were not found for some time after they were killed and their bodies badly decomposed when found.

Then the Stamper parties called on the sheriff of Carter county to help them, but the sheriff refused to do so, and then they went to Grayson and got the police force to take us, but we were ready for them also. They sent us word that they would take the fort and kill every one of us. The attack was made on the fort before day, I was down stairs attending the wounded men when they opened fire on us. George Underwood asked me what that meant and I told him he would find out later on. I could see the bulk of men. Underwood told me to wait until I could see the sight of my gun and then give it to them. They continued to pour the lead into the fort and several bullets came through the doors and windows before we got the weak places barred. The women turned up bed-steads and tables against the doors and put feather beds and carpets against them and

that stopped the balls from coming in. We had been expecting trouble and had called in all our men to the fort. The fight continued until about ten o'clock in the day, then they stopped firing and sent Alvis Underwood's wife to us to ask us to surrender. We told them no, we wanted to fight a while longer any way. The police called in his men and left badly whipped. Seven of the police force was wounded and two killed outright, two more dying of their wounds. We still stayed at the fort. The doctor gave George Lewis Underwood up to die and he professed religion and wanted to be baptized, the women made a dam across the branch and we all took him out and baptized him in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost.

Then the soldiers were called out and sent against us. They came and arrested all but John Martin and myself, we fled to Floyd county. I was rewarded seven hundred dollars and one day at Salt Lick some of the Coburns tried to arrest me, but I had the same gun on me I had at Ft. Underwood and I made them stand at a distance. I then went to Letcher county and stopped for a while at Miles Webb's, about five miles above Whitesburg.

CHAPTER XIV.

One day John Wright came to Mr. Webb's and asked me to go to Whitesburg with him and I told him of my trouble and of the reward that was offered for me, and that I was afraid of being arrested if I went to town. He still insisted on my going and I told him if he would befriend me I would go, and he said he would. I went to Whitesburg riding behind Wright, but we hadn't been there long before some parties tried to arrest me. I went to Wright and told him what was up. We went to the parties and Wright told them he had me in his charge and that no damn man should get me. You can say what you please about old John Wright, but he done me a favor and kept me from getting into more trouble. I then went to Floyd county and stopped with a man by the name of Sherwood Osborn. I moved my family on Osborn's farm and made one crop. Osborn was a high-stepper, but we got along

all right and had many a big spree together. I then went to Caney Fork of Beaver and rented me a farm. Bill Hall, sheriff of Floyd county, had a pretty miss by the name of Moore and she was causing trouble with Hall and his wife, so Hall hired me to keep her for him. The sheriff made one trip to see her, but the next time he came she went back on him (I had been whispering a soft tune in her ear), she told him to go and not to come back. There was another girl by the name of Justus, as pretty as a speckled pup, and I also took her home with me and in a short time my girls disagreed and such pulling of hair you never saw before. I called one Joe and the other Big Bill. I told them to walk out in the yard and fight it out. At last we all agreed to disagree and they both left.

I sold out and moved to Wichata, Kansas. I didn't stay in Kansas very long, my mother was taken sick and wanted to come back to Kentucky, so I pulled up and started back and got at far as Colton, Ky., and there my mother died, and upon a lonely point, all covered with sage and red bushes, I helped to lay away forever the best friend I ever had.

I stopped on Turkey creek, in Carter county, made one crop there. I had rented a field from a Mr. Sizemore and after he gathered his corn he turned his cows in on my corn without giving me any notice. I took down my old rifle and went to the field, killed three of his cattle and sent him word he could have the beef for the skinning.

I had one girl large enough to keep house for me. My mother told me on her death bed if I ever married again she wanted me to marry a Miss Goodman who had waited on her so long. I then went to West Virginia in company with John and Harry Fultz. We took the train at Ashland, Ky., and got off at Sewell, W. Va. We then took the Sewell mountain until late in the evening, returned to the river and went to a house near by, but finding no one living there, we struck up a fire and began to camp for the night. I heard a pack of hounds coming down a ridge making for the river, I told the boys that the dogs were after a deer, I looked up the river, saw a deer coming, I grabbed old Shampee and blazed away and down came a big buck. A man and woman were on the other side of the river. The man got in the boat with the woman and rowing to the deer the woman took the buck by the horns and they rowed him over to us. The man asked us to go home with him and lay out on the ground. The man and woman got

in the boat, the woman again took the deer by the horns and we all crossed to their place. We dressed the deer for the pot. We all felt all O. K. you bet with plenty of buck meat wrapped up in old hog's lard and plenty of honey, and better than all, a jug of mountain moonshine.

After breakfast next morning we bid the good man and his wife good-bye and hit the dirt. We reached Beech mountain, stayed all night with an old sager. We laid in our bread and hired him and his horse to take us to the Beech mountain. He took us to an old shanty known afterwards as Jones' camp. The first day's hunt we had bad luck, one of the boys killed a wolf, the next day we struck a bear's track and the bear had gone into a big ruff. It fell to my lot to go through the ruff. I went in tracking the bear. I looked ahead of me and saw two deer lying behind a log. I eased my old rifle off my shoulder and saw by leaning forward I could kill them both. I took aim at the joint of one's neck and fired, the bullet broke one's neck and shot the other through the head. I raised a yell and the boys ran to me thinking I had killed a bear. We took the two deer to camp, and had plenty of venison for a while. The next day John Fulz and I went to the woods, the day was very foggy, we only killed two turkeys. The old man Fultz was taken sick and we left him to mind the camp and John and I did the hunting. We eat all we could of our meat and wrapping the rest up in our deer skins we shouldered our guns and made our way to the falls of Kanawa.

On Cherry river I met a wagoner with two hounds. I gave him seven dollars for the dogs and before I got to the falls we met a colored man who rode up and calling the dogs by their names. I quickly found out they belonged to him or at least he knew the dogs. He said they were his and he had to have his dogs. I told him to pay me my money back and he could have them, but he tried to bluff me, and I told him to hit the grit or there would be a dead coon left. He took me at my word and I told him to tell the owner of the dogs to meet me down at the station and pay me my money back and he could have his dogs, but he failed to show up and I put my dogs on the train and took them home with me and the owner finally sent to Floyd county and paid me for the dogs and I registered them back to him.

I then moved upon the head of Beaver creek, in sight of where I was born. I rented a farm from Ben Hall and made two crops there, but just before I moved to Beaver,

while I was at Jones' Fort, a boy by the name of Fultz killed a man in Carter county, and young Fultz came to me for protection. That night I put the young man away where I thought no one could find him, there was seven hundred dollars reward for Fultz. Next day Tom Prater, a United States Marshall from Grayson, came to my house with a posse of men and I was in bed and told them to come in. Prater asked me where Fultz was and I told him I had him hidden and that we were eating my own chickens and that no man could get him. Prater flew mad at me and I put my hand under my pillow, drew out my forty-five and reached over and pulled old Shampee up to my bed and Prater and his party left the way they had come.

In a few days afterward Talton Hall, Black Hawk Sizemore and old John Wright came after Fultz. I told them the same I told Prater, except I told them if they would give me fifty dollars I would bring Fultz into the yard and then they could not get him. I think this was the first insult offered the Hall and Wright faction.

CHAPTER XV.

Ben Hall, of whom I had rented, was a merchant. One day in going home from the store I met up with Talt Hall and Bill Bates and they asked me to join their clan and said it made no difference what any of their men done that old John Wright was their Captain and that he would not let any of his men suffer by the law. I told them no, that I was out of trouble and that I wished to remain so. After that it seemed to me that they were mad at me.

A man by the name of Frank Salyer then lived on the head of Beaver near me. He had a lewd wife, so Talton Hall stayed most of his time at the home of Salyer, only when he was on a raid. Mr. Salyer soon caught on to what was going on at his home and left and went to Wise county, Virginia, and on his way back to Kentucky, he stopped several days at John Wright's on Elk Horn creek, near Pound Gap and where the city of Jenkins now stands, and Bill Lee Hall, a brother of Talt Hall, was also staying with Wright, came on to Beaver and told Hall that Salyer was

at John Wright's and in a few days Salyer came on home. Hall was there with some of his men. I lived about one mile from Salyer and was clearing a large new ground and one day I went out asking some hands to help me at a fencing, and on my way home I saw Hall and his men at Salyer's house. I saw what was up. Hall and Willie Bates took Salyer out behind a crib. Hall was before Salyer and Bates was walking behind him and had his hand on the lock of his gun and when they came from behind the crib I stepped up to Hall and began to beg for Salyer's life. Hall told me that he wouldn't have it done then, but that Salyer's life was damned short. So that gave me a chance to get away and I went, you bet, for I knew if they killed Salyer there they would also kill me. Salyer was shot and killed that night as he stepped out on the steps of his house, by some man, who was standing at the corner of the house. Bill Bates, one of Hall's men was the major. Bill Hawk Sizemore, another one of the clan, was the constable and Tommy Talton was the Judge, and whatever Tommy said was the law. Next day Sizemore, the constable, summoned the neighbors to hold an inquest. I was also summoned, we held the inquest and pronounced Salyer murdered without cause by some unknown person, but the proof showed that about dark Talt Hall sent George Johnson and Willie Bates, two of his lientenatnts, away and there was a big snow on the ground and Hall told Salyer to step out and see if it was not raining, and as Salyer stepped out Hall said, "Frank it is sure enough raining," and then Salyer was shot. Hall ran up-stairs and fired a signal gun in the loft to let the men know that Salyer was killed. The next day when I come to Salyer's house, Hall and Salyer's wife were laying across the bed. Bill Cook and I dressed the corpse, and while we were dressing the dead man, Salyer's wife was sitting on Hall's lap on the hearth. Willie Bates came in and threw his gun on me, and Sizemore, the constable, caught the gun. After this I went into the house and sat down on a bed. Bates followed me in and sit down on the same bed, with his gun on his shoulder and his hand on the lock of his gun. I looked him in the face and moved up near him and sat down very close to him in order to be able to catch his gun if he should try to shoot me. If I had known that Hall and his men were not at the front door watching for me I would have taken Bates' gun and sold out-right there and then. The only way I had to get out alive was to take hold of the coffin and help carry the corps

along with the other men. Salyer was taken near my house to be buried and as soon as I got near home I slipped away from the crowd and made for the house. When I got to the house I looked out and there was Hall on Salyer's horse with Salyer's wife behind him, and if my old trusty bear gun had been at home I would have stopped them right there, but I had loaned her to another. I told my wife I was going to watch Hall and his crowd. I saw them go to Bill Bates. Hall was riding Salyer's horse with Salyer's wife on behind him, they all went into the Bates fort, Hall got his fiddle and began to play the "Sourwood Mountain," and they all had a big jolly time. I went back home and told my wife that I was afraid to stay at home that night, so we locked up and went down to Ben Hall's. Next morning one of Talt Hall's spies came to the store and tried to get me and Ben Hall to go with him up the creek. I told Ben to get his horse and take his wife and go to Miles Hall, about five miles below and I would take the woods and join him there. I told my wife to go back home and stay there until I gave her word what to do, and when she got home the Talt Hall clan had took the roof off my smokehouse and had took all our meat, turned over the meal barrel and had played hell in general.

The day that Salyer was buried George Johnson and Willie Bates pretended to find a letter in the dead man's pocket signed by Ben Hall's wife. This letter was written by the Hall clan and so placed by some of them, pretending that Ben Hall had hired me to kill Salyer. As Ben Hall was fixing to leave Big John Hall rode up to the store and told us that he saw Talt Hall, John Wright and several of their men at the forks of the creek, about one-half a mile above, in the woods. I took leg bail to the brush. I had no arms of any kind. I went to Sherwood Osborn's and got a forty-five gun of him.

CHAPTER XVI.

Captain Bolin Hall, Ben Hall's father, was away at that time at Mt. Sterling with stock, and as soon as the Captain came back he took Ben and his wife, together

with my wife, back home. I then went through the mountains to Hindman, the county seat of Knott county, and took out warrants for the parties who had murdered Salyer, but I could not induce the sheriff, or any of the county officers, to execute the warrants. They were all afraid of Hall and his clan of outlaws. I then went to Dick Vance, who the Hall clan had tried to murder some time before at Catlettsburg while they were all attending Federal Court as moonshiners. At the hotel at Catlettsburg one of Hall's spies came up into the hotel, and lighting a match, examined the faces of the sleeping men, after locating the bed in which Vance was sleeping, he returned to the streets and brought back with him Talt Hall, Uriah Bates and Andy Hall, and going to the bed where he had left Vance some time before, without lighting any matches, they picked up a man lying on the bed where Vance was when the spy examined his face and carrying him to a window and hurled him to the brick pavement below, killing him instantly. But the man thrown out of the three-story window proved to be John Adams, of Letcher county. Vance was not asleep when the spy lit the match in the room and suspecting that they intended to murder him he left the bed where he and Adams were sleeping and went to another bed in another part of the building. Vance after returning home from the Federal Court waylaid and shot Andy Hall from the brush, and as Vance and the Hall clan were momentarily expecting trouble I told Vance the circumstances. He agreed to get some men and take the warrants and try to arrest Hall and his gang. He loaned me one of his guns, we took to the mountains, went to Fort Bates and when we got near the fort I saw Talt Hall sitting in the yard reading a newspaper. I told Vance that if we could get to the first bench of the mountains we could get old Tommy. We took our guns in our hands, got down on our bellies and crawled within forty yards of him, about the time we were ready to shoot a sudden snow storm came up and Hall got up and went into the fort. We then went to my house, stayed there that night, and when the news got out that we were in with warrants, Hall and his men pulled out for their headquarters at John Wright's. I then told my wife to tell everybody that I had left and gone to Ohio. As soon as they heard this Hall brought his men back to Fort Bates. We soon learned of this and Vance and myself put ourselves in the brush and hastened to Fort Bates. We took a stand near the forks of the branch, above the fort, and in

a short time we saw two men come driving a yoke of oxen that belonged to Frank Salyer. Both the men had guns. It was Talt Hall and Willie Bates, the very two men I wanted, but Vance said it was not them and we let them pass. We then went up the creek to German Isaacs. I showed my old white head to Isaac's wife and she knew me and motioned for me to come down. Isaacs told me that Hall and Bates had just passed up the road going back to the fort and was driving Salyer's cattle with them. Hall was dressed up from top to toe in Salyer's clothes and that was the reason that Vance didn't know him. Isaacs said that Hall and his men had been trying to kill his brother, Martin Isaacs, and had run him from home. I asked him where his brother was and he told me where I might find him. I went to Isaacs, got me five more men and went to Fort Bates. When we got to the fort they were all in the house and I soon saw that there was something up by old Nell Bates' actions. Nell was Talt Hall's sister. She would come out of the fort, go around the house and look up and down the road and then up in the hill. I saw Bill Bates and Bill Hawk Sizemore come out of the fort and go up the branch behind the barn. When Hall and his men come out of the house they come out the back door in a run. I let them come in range, I ordered them to surrender, they at once made ready for battle, Hall got behind a tree and threw his gun on me, but I fired first, the bullet struck Hall in the shoulder and knocked him down, he staggered to his feet and ran to the fort, he fell as he reached the yard, his sister Nell grabbed him and pulled him behind the house and into the fort by the back door. By this time all of Hall's men had regained the fort and we had a lively time for a while. In the heat of the battle Talt Hall's wife run out on the porch, climbed up on the fence and hallowed, "Hurrah for Old Claib Jones, kill all of them and that damned Salyer woman too." I told her that that was what I was there for. We had a sorry lot of guns, the fort was built of heavy logs and our bullets would not penetrate them. Mac Hall, on our side, was wounded and died a few days later. Hall and his men slipped out and left the fort that night and next day on Jack's creek, in Floyd county, waylaid and killed Abner Little, the constable, who was with us in the attack on Fort Bates. Hall and his men then fled to Fort Wright, on Elkhorn. After the fight at Fort Bates I took three of my men and went to Cincinnati and

bought thirty-seven Winchester rifles and returned to Knott county.

CHAPTER XVII.

Isom Sloan was then jailor of Knott county and Dolf Draughon swore out warrants for me and Vance and the other of my men for shooting and wounding Talt Hall and others. We gave bond and I made up a company of men and the Governor offered a reward of five hundred dollars each for Hall and his men. I was appointed a special bailiff to arrest them. I then went after Hall, but he left the State and fled to Virginia, so we never met any more. His men made Fort Wright their headquarters. I received a message from old John Wright saying if I came to Letcher county, I, together with all my men, would be killed, that the good citizens of Letcher would kill us. So I went to Letcher to see if the message was true. I found all the citizens friends to law and order and to me and my men. We made several trips to Fort Wright, but didn't find any men there. We rested a while and then made another raid on the fort. When we got to within about twelve miles of the fort we took to the woods and marched only during the night and would lay up during the day. It took us two nights to get to the fort. When we would cross a road we would lay rocks across the road to step on and then the last man to cross would take up the rocks and throw them out of the road in order to leave no signs. When we came to Elkhorn creek we went about five miles in the water and when we got near the fort we went up a rocky branch and came around the hill-side as near the fort as we could without being discovered. After breakfast we saw a woman ride up to the fort, dismount, and go into the house, then came back out and rode up and down on every road looking for signs, after making her search she went back to the fort and in a few minutes we saw several men come out of the fort with guns. I ordered them to surrender, and then the fight began. They fought a running fight, Wright and his men run towards the Cumberland mountains and the old tall Sycamore could certainly run some.

He was shooting a breech-loading shot gun and how he peppered the buck shots around us was fierce. Aunt Nell was there too, and she screamed to the top of her voice that old Claib Jones was back there trying to kill her people.

After Wright had run away the firing ceased at the fort and we went down and John Wright's wife fixed us breakfast and talked freely to us and had every appearance of being a nice lady. She always told me the truth, but Uncle John had five or six lady friends and they all come to the fort to see if anybody was killed, and they looked us all over as though we had horns. After our charge on the fort we went up into the upper story and captured Miles Bates, Bill Hawk Sizemore and Bill Dee Hall, a brother of Talt Hall. We went to Prestonburg with the prisoners. We got as far as Hindman the first day and night and there we met with trouble over the prisoners. Dolph Draughon sometimes before had taken a posse of men and made a raid on Fort Wright and on their return was waylaid in ambush by Wright and his men. One of Draughon's men was killed and he had a horse shot from under him and he wanted to kill the prisoners. I told him no if he wanted to kill men to go and capture them. He lined up his men and ordered them to fire on the prisoners. I ordered my men in line and shoved the prisoners behind us, so Draughon saw it was fight and he pulled in his horns and left us. So on that trip we broke up Fort Wright and sent Uncle John and his men to Virginia.

Next day we started to Prestonburg with the prisoners and put them in jail. Jim Lane was jailor and he was afraid that Wright and his men would come and take the prisoners out and I told Lane that I could take one man and hold the prisoners safe. The court told me to get my man and guard the jail. I selected Cicero Cox, a man I knew would stand. There was a large reward offered for Talt Hall, George Johnson and others but I never had any reward offered for John Wright. After we got some of Hall's men in jail John Wright brought in all the other men except Talt Hall, Wash Craft and George Johnson. Craft fled the country and George Johnson was found murdered in the mountains. It is said by a man who he took to be his friend. John Wright got the reward for the men that was brought in. There was only one man wounded in the fight on Fort Wright. Bill Bates was shot in the back with a Winchester bullet that had passed through a fence rail and only buried itself under the skin. After

guarding the jail at Prestonburg for a while I went back to Hindman and jailor Isom Sloan resigned and I was appointed in his place. This was one year before the county officers were to be elected. My old war opponent, the Rebel Captain Ans Hays was on the ticket for jailor, so I concluded to give him a race. It looked like I had no show, I was a Republican and the Captain was on the Democratic ticket and at that time there were only eighty-four Republicans in Knott county, but I licked the Rebel's flint by one hundred and eighty-four majority and this made the Captain mad and he concluded to run me from the county, so we soon got into war, but as I had licked the Captain so many times during the Civil War I still believed that I could put him out of business, and instead of my leaving, I made him leave, but the Hays faction would slip back in the night and send in their spies to see where I was. I could always tell when the Hays were in town by the way Sarah Dukes' old dog would bark. One time they placed themselves in the brush and as I went driving in my cows they fired six shots at me. I fell to the ground as if shot dead and they went away leaving me in the road. They were bad marksmen or cowards, one or both, for they never touched me. They tried every way they could to kill me. I had to summon some men to guard the jail and the Hays' got out a warrant for me and the guards for banding, and got the sheriff to summon them to arrest me and the men I had guarding the jail. I had also warrants issued for them. I summoned men to help arrest them and we got after each other in the brush. I returned to town and took up headquarters in the jail. The same night they came to town and took up their quarters in the old Draughon fort across the street from the jail. I sent them a message to come over and have dinner with me free of charge, they said to tell me they thanked me very much, they had been to dinner. I then ordered them to surrender, that I had warrants for them, but they refused and we began putting the lead at each other. We soon drove them out of the loft to the under floor. I saw the door open a little, I fired a bullet through the door, the ball passed Lewis Hays, standing in the fire place, striking a rock, it bounced back and struck Hays in the stomach. Hays sent me word that he was shot and couldn't fight any longer and that he wanted to go home to die, but I learned afterwards that he only wanted to go home to change clothes.

A few days after this the Hays faction, in attempting

to be arrested by the officers, they killed John Sloan and wounded Andy Sloan. In a few days the sheriff sent me word that he would send the Hays back to Buckhorn and would destroy the warrants if I would destroy my warrants. After the fight I went down to the fort and got three brass kettles that belonged to Aunt Racheal Hays. She came after the pots and I told her that I had captured them in battle and they were mine, but I sent her pots back to her.

CHAPTER XVII.

Law and order soon resumed its normal course and several outlaws were captured, tried and convicted to the penitentiary at Frankfort, Ky., and as it was my duty as jailor to keep them in jail, I kept a good guard on duty. One night several men made a raid on the jail and tried to rescue the prisoners. They were trying to break the door down with a sledge hammer when the guards fired on them; and a man by the name of Miles Vance, a brother of my friend, Dick Vance, was killed, but we suceeded in driving the raiders off and kept the prisoners. Soon after this the Vances and the Bates, who were always my allys in the Jones and Hall war fell out among themselves, went to war with each other. After several men were killed on each side of the county authorities made up a posse of men and captured the leader on both sides and brought them to my jail. I kept all of them safe, several were tried, convicted of murder, some going up for life. I served out my term as jailor and at its close the arm of the law was in full swing and peace was general among the people.

During my term of office as jailor of Knott county, the French and Eversole war had broken out in Perry county, and I was applied to by the citizens of Perry to assist in restoring order. The trouble was principally between B. F. French on one side and Joseph Eversole on the other, both lawyers, wealthy and influential men. About fifty men, some of them the best citizens of Perry county, were killed, including Joseph Eversole, the leader of one faction. I went to Perry and in company with some citizens we went to Frankfort and secured an order for fifty soldiers who

went to Perry and succeeded in capturing the leaders together with some of their men. A change of venue was taken to Clark and Fayette counties, and after several efforts to bring the different clans to trial a general amnesty was granted both factions and all was liberated. This was my last effort to serve my country and to make peace among my native people. I am now nearly 90 years old and will soon have to answer the roll-call across the border and I feel that my life has been one of circumstances rather than desire, and I hope that my friends who survive me will help to spread the mantle of charity over my many faults and bury me in peace among my native hills.

JAMES CLAYBOURN JONES.

CHAPTER XIX.

After writing his own autobiography up to and including the French-Eversole war, Old Claib has left us to only guess at the next twenty years of his life, except that the author had an occasion to interview the old fuedist about one year before his death, and was told by him that his old age had not been in any way disturbed, and that he was almost perfect contented with his lot in life during his old age.

His death occurred at Warren, Knox county, Kentucky, on the 27th day of November, 1914, and the body was brought to Hazard and laid to rest in the private burying ground of D. Y. Combs, one of the wealthiest and most influential men in Eastern Kentucky, and Combs, in a conversation with the author the day of the burial, said that the reason he was so appreciative of the body of the noted feudist, was that his father was once captured by Jones' men and, being court marshaled by them in Claib's absence, had decided to kill his father, but that Claib on coming up, interferred and saved his life, and that his father had on several occasions, told him to always treat Old Claib well, and that he was willing to let Old Claib be buried in his private lot, among the cedars overlooking the town of Hazard, and near where he, himself, expected to be buried. The funeral was attended by a large concourse of people, including the author.

The last twenty years of the life of the grim old warrior was spent in peace with all men, having joined the church and lived a life of Christian endeavor and repretence for the many sins, that he was honest enough to confess to all the world and consented to write his life and submit it to the author for publication.

It seems that Old Claib must have lived a charmed life, for in all the thrilling encounters, narrow escapes and numerous murders in which he was engaged, he was never wounded by a bullet, while more than one hundred men were killed in the encounters in which he took part. And it is quite remarkable, indeed, when we follow this boy of pioneer days up through seventy-five years of almost unabated feudist warfare, and the turnings of fate that almost invarably plunged him at every turn of his life into difficulty, and it is without doubt beyond the ordinary course of human events that he should escape and always come out on the side of law and order, and that he should never be tried and punished for any of the crimes of which he was accused. It seems to the unbiased mind that there is only one solution, and that he was possessed with an alert mind, imbued with an acute intuition into the affairs of life of men and that he took the great Laws of Nature at their cold stern givings and by following the law of least resistence was able to preserve his sensative and remarkable vitality, untouched and uninjured up to the advanced allotment of eighty-eight years.

J. W. HALL.

Hazard, Kentucky, February 1, 1915.